Dude, What Was I Talking About?
A New Sociolinguistic Framework for Marijuana-Intoxicated Speech

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This project is concerned with the discourse patterns of marijuana intoxicated speech.

1.2 It will be shown that the rules for conversation negotiation seem to be more overtly followed when the speakers are stoned and more flexible when they are sober.

1.3 By studying how and when a group of speakers breaks, or strictly adheres to, rules for conversation, we can begin to revise and reconsider these rules for all speakers.

2. HYPOTHESIS

2.1 This work will be centered around the ways in which Topic Management styles differ between sober speech and stoned speech.

2.2 I believe that, when stoned, while the rules for turn-taking (Sacks, et al. 1974) will be broken more often, these rules will also be more readily accessible to the speakers.

2.3 "Stoned speech" must go away from being analyzed as conversation, and go towards being analyzed as if it were a meeting (Larrue & Trognon, 1992) in terms of the adherence to, or fronted knowledge of, who has the "right" to speak, how long a turn should last, and who "controls" the topics.

3. FRAMEWORKS

3.1 Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson (1974) laid out the basic rules for turn-taking in conversation as basically:

a.) - if conversation is proceeding whereby "current speaker selects next [speaker]", the selected speaker is obliged to take his or her turn when the current speaker designates the transfer, no one else has this right or obligation

b.) -if conversation is proceeding without the above provisions, then whomever speaks first at the transfer gains the speaking turn

c.) -these provisions continually re-apply throughout the course of talk

3.2 Geluykens (1992) provides the more specific and accessible work on topic introduction and topic management.

3.3 Larrue & Trognon (1992) provide an augmentative work to Sacks, et al. (1974) on turn-taking in meetings, providing a frame for the re-interpretation of the stoned speech data.

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4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 PARTICIPANTS

a.) -three groups:
- a.i) Group 0 consists of five participants
- a.ii) Group 1 consists of three participants, all data presented here are from this group
  - D: 21, male, homosexual, from rural Southern Illinois
  - A: 21, female, bisexual, from rural Southern Illinois
  - N: 22, male, heterosexual, from Chicago suburbs
- a.iii) Group 2 consists of two participants who are dating one another

b.) -in college

c.) -white non-Hispanic and from a middle class background

d.) -semi-regular marijuana smokers (semi-regular defined as 3-12 times a month, but not more than 3 times per week)

4.2 CLASSIFICATIONS OF TOPICS

4.2.1 Geluykens (1992) defined **topics** as:

a.) --Topics are defined as information which has a low degree of Recoverability (i.e. the extent to which an element is derivable from the previous discourse record) and which has Persistence (i.e. the recurrence of the element, directly or indirectly, in the subsequent discourse context). . . (p. 181)

4.2.2 Geluykens (1992),on **topic introduction**, stated:

a.) --. . .discourse topics are not straightforwardly introduced in a unilateral way, but are rather negotiated through an interactional process which is reflected in the turn-taking system [of Sacks, et al., 1974] . . . (p. 182)

b.) --Once a referent has been mentioned for the first time, it is not self-evident that it will also be developed in the subsequent discourse. It is only those referents which do get developed which I will regard as proper discourse topics (p. 185)

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4.2.3 I differ from these definitions, and expand "topic" to the following three-part distinction, all of which can be further categorized as either Successes or Failures, as shown in Figure 1:

Unmitigated Changes (UC): those topic shifts with a low degree of Recoverability from the immediately preceding discourse, and, which are obviously (usually non-overlapping) moves (or attempted moves) toward a new topic.

Mitigated Changes (MC): those topic shifts with a medium to high degree of Recoverability from the immediately preceding discourse, and, which are obviously (usually non-overlapping) moves (or attempted moves) toward a new topic.

Topic Regains (TR): those topics shifts which are directly Recoverable from the discourse preceding the immediately preceding discourse (the penultimate topic).

a.) This gives *four possible main categories* for ordinary conversation and *at least six sub-categories* for discussing turns and topics more completely.

b.) This adds a pragmatic element to the record that Geluykens's model lacks.

c.) Since the branches from the subsets to the main categories re-converge, when one examines only the final type it is impossible to be certain of any mitigating force.

d.) the final outcome stage is for discussing topic shift types in the conversation as a whole

e.) the intermediate stage is useful for discussing topic shift types in individual speakers.

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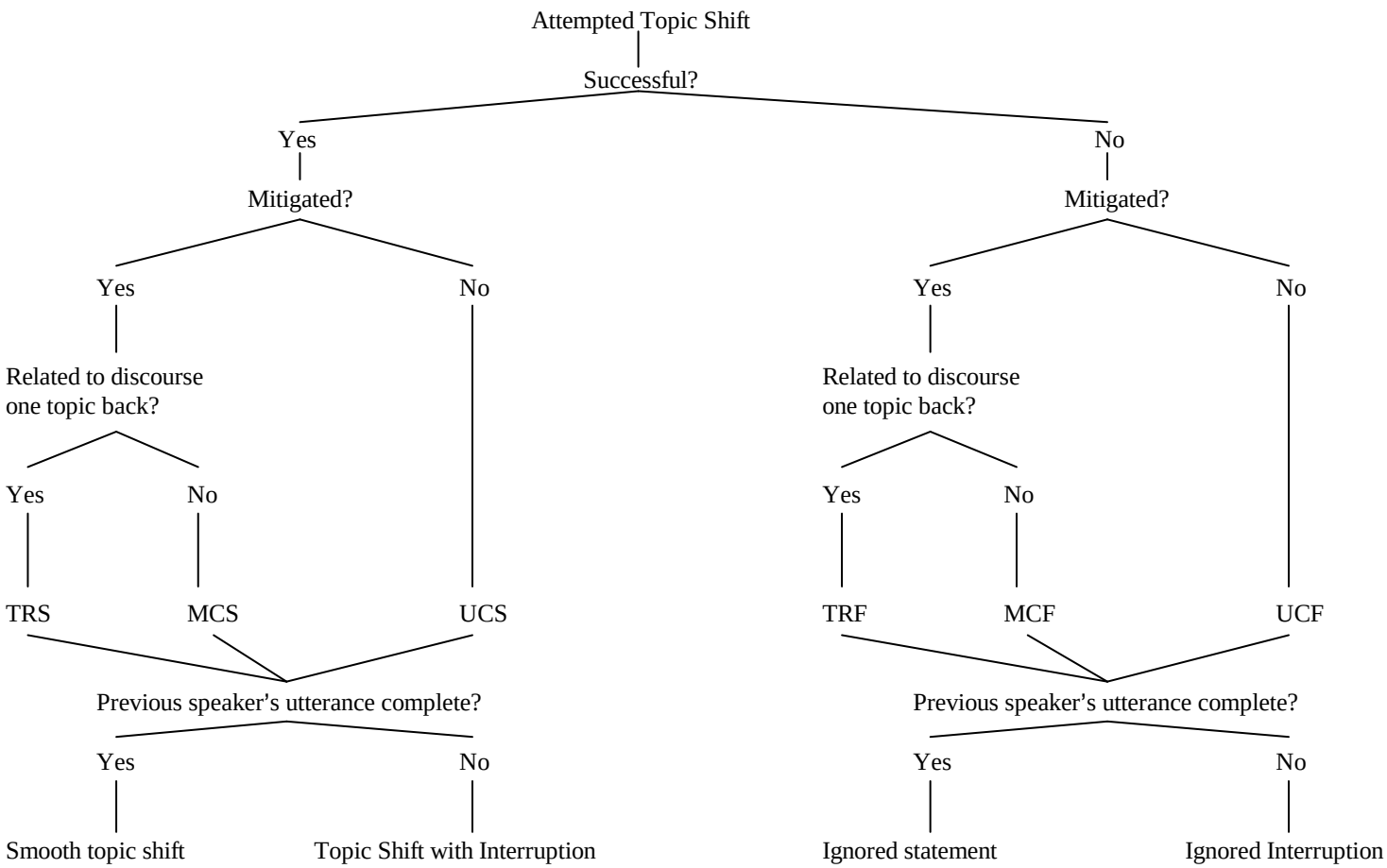

Fig. 1. Topic Shift and Interruption as Autonomous, Interconnected Units

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4.3 CLASSIFICATIONS OF TURN-TAKING

4.3.1 The rules for talk and turn-taking at meetings outlined in Larrue & Trognon (1993) differs from the rules laid out by Sacks, et al. (1974) in that:

a.) next speaker: (1) does not define the transition-relevance place— it is the current speaker who indicates that he has finished his turn— and (2) does not grant himself the right to speak. . . (Larrue & Trognon, 1993, p. 183)

4.3.2 This difference between turn-taking (and topic-shift) in conversation and in meetings is likewise what I expect to be descriptive for the main difference between sober and stoned speech.

4.3.3 However, in stoned speech no one speaker is announced (explicitly) as the "head" of the group.

5. RESULTS

5.0 Geluykens (1992) states that the basic model for **topic introduction** is:

Stage 1 (A): topic introduction (bare NP = referent)
Stage 2 (B): acknowledgment signal
Stage 3 (A): topic establishment (second mention of referent) (Geluykens, 1992, p. 189)

5.1 This frame is seen perfectly in the sober speech in staves (1s22) and with extended acknowledgment/establishment in (1s44)

(1s22)	D:	it's a- coin purse.	It carries gold.	And weed.		Oh yeah was he good?		
	A:				You asked me if he was good/		I-.	Have never experienced anything
	N:		euh yeah.			~~~~~~~~~~		

Speaker *A* explicitly introduces a topic ("you asked me. . ."); *D* acknowledges ("Oh yeah. . ."); *A* establishes ("I have never. . .")

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(1s44) D1: Didn't really look.
A1: An' y'know how/ Timid he looks n' stuff?
N1: I'll stop. Maybe- y'kn- maybe a couple more will pop in.

D2: timid.
A2: He comes across that way
N2: No he doesn't look timid **at all**

Speaker *A* has the topic introduction ("An' y'know how/ timid. . ."); *D* acknowledges ("Didn't really look timid"); *N* then further acknowledges/establishes, ("No he doesn't look. . ."); and finally *A* establishes ("He comes across. . .")

5.2 However, note the revision of this frame in the stoned speech of staves (1x27) and (1x66)

(1x27) D: ~~eat this. Eat this. Eat this, lick it off my finger. ~~~~~
A: Ohh. Damn Mike!
N: You saw me jack off? Where was I? Sick! I don't want that fudge! Why don'chu go pack it?

Only speaker *D* is needed for the introduction ("eat this") and acknowledgment ("eat this, lick it off my finger"); only after the completion of stages 1 and 2 does *N* then establish topic ("Sick! I don't want that fudge. . .")

(1x66) D1: I'm a mere seven inches. A mere seven inches long it's a bad day.
A1: Bad day. That's no seven inches. Shit! ~~~~~~~~~~~
N1: Oh bad day huh? Your stream didn't split at all. You're right on target.

D2: ((hysterical laughing))
A2: ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~ Ahh oh god that was gross.
N2: You're a great shot man. You can piss all over my floor Quit pissing all over the place just get it in the bowl man

****N*'s topic introductions here have only him as a participant: his topic introduction ("your stream"); acknowledgment ("You're right on. . . you're a great shot. . ."); and establishment ("you can piss all over. . .") are all in monologue; the acceptance of this topic can be seen in the laughter and further reference in later staves***

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5.2.1 This deviation in stoned speech is not a constant; several instances were found that followed Geluykens's model, as in stave (1x6).

(1x6) D1: No I've done that already today. Kitty's eatin' the dope. Kitty's eating the research. () fuck.
A1: Heh hum.
N1: Smell your stinky belly. Kitty- Kitty get out of the dope! We'll put'chu in the box.

D2: What- () Abu-Dabi
A2: Put kitty in the box! Put 'em in th- put 'em in the box. How 'bout (2) Aktar Wat/.
N2: Gonna ship you off. Where sh'we send kitty? Abu-Dabi? Aktar Wat?

****N* introduces ("We'll put'chu in the box"); *A* acknowledges ("Put kitty in the box!"); *N* establishes ("Gonna ship. . ." "Where should we send..."); and *D* further establishes ("Abu-Dabi")***

5.3 Occasionally we find abrupt topic change. Instead of an acknowledgment, the first speaker is met with a new topic introduction by the second speaker.

5.3.1 Geluykens states that "the fact that such hearer-short-circuiting is quite rare is to be expected, given the normal principles of cooperation in conversation" (Geluykens, 1992, p. 195).

a.) this case is rare in the sober data

b.) however, it is quite common in the stoned data. Stave (1x11) is an excellent example.

(1x11) D: Okay but what was my original statement? Before I got onto the Regis thing.
A: go to the bud- Now Buddhists- run it. The Buddhists use it as the temple. I don't know.
N: (Kitty, what do you have to say? Say something for me kitty. Kitty. Kitty Kitty say something.)

Speaker *A* introduces a topic ("The Buddhists use it. . .") and rather than acknowledgment, is met with a new topic introduction by *D* ("Okay but what was my original. . ."). Speaker *N* is not part of the conversation at hand— he is talking to the cat.

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5.3.2 Geluykens goes on to re-assess this problem as support for claiming that conversation is not purely linear:
One can look upon such (rare) speaker-short-circuit as special cases of conversational repair. . .
provide[ing] support to the claim that topic flow should not be approached on a purely quantitative
basis. . .too restricted to handle problems like these. . . (Geluykens, 1992, p. 196).

5.3.3 However, I would suggest, especially in the case of stoned speech, that these "rare" anomalies are simply indicative of a different system in operation all together.

5.4 If one re-analyzes stave (1x11) in Larrue & Trognon's (1993) meeting model, one sees that *D* is acting as "chairman" and ending *A*'s comment by self-selecting for next topic. In fact, *D* is, to quote Larrue & Trognon, 1993, p. 188: "forced to remind the others of what initiated his request to speak" (1x11, *D*: "Okay but what. . .").

5.4.1 **It is exactly as if *D* were operating inside the conventions for meetings and not inside the conventions for conversation.**

5.4.2 This is also evident in staves (1x28)

(1x28)	D1:		Hehuh. Shut up.				Cringles space man?	
	A1:						What?	
	N1:	Why- it's- yer-your coat is made of plastic.		An' its- look at you crinkle space man.				**Crinkle.** Crinkle?
	D2:		Oh!	Crinkle the sound I make.		Is it wiggin' ya out?		Heu huh huh uh.
	A2:							Nathan feels
	N2:	Movement?	Crinkle. ~~~~ Space Man.		Yeah.	Like a space man.	No!	He huh huh huh.

****N* begins the topic, (*N:* " . . .your coat is made of plastic"); *N* also self-selects to pre-establish ("look at you crinkle space man"); then selects *D* to fully establish and acknowledge with next turn ("Crinkle? Movement?").***

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5.5 Geluykens (1992): "explicit topic marking is probably employed more often in other discourse types . . ." (p. 210)

5.5.1 Geluykens (1992) "explicitness scale" (p.211)-- declarative clauses marked as least explicit while topic phrases are marked as most explicit.

a.) Declarative statements are remarked by Geluykens as "the least obtrusive way of introducing a new topic" (pp. 204-205)

5.5.2 In the sober data, only four possible times does any kind of overt topic marking appear.

5.5.3 In the stoned data, on the other hand, this feature is used often. Staves (1x4) (*D:* "Where did that story come from. . ."), (1x23) (*D:* "That came from a larger kernel of story"), (1x36) (*D:* "I gotta s'prise!"), (1x42) (*N:* "I'm gonna reveal what you just did"), and (1x65) (*A:* "Can I narrate").

(1x4) D: NO DUDE NO! IT'S CUZ I WAS WAITING FOR YOU T' JERK OFF. OH! Where did that story come from though? Where did
A: What about you jerkin' off?
N: You are an ABC fanatic. Disney Boy.

(1x23) D: who wants t' be a millionare during Eric's jack off time. But where did that come from? That came from a larger kernel of story. Storiage.
A: An' mine. Eric d' you realize-
N:

(1x36) D: HhMy a(i)ss. My a(i)ss. Where'd they go where'd th' animal crackers go? ((raised pitch)) **I gotta s'prise!** Aaa haaaa
A:
N: What is your su'prise? Your ass? They's in there.

(1x42) D: Oh sh- Don't say that on tape. I fed kitty, look she's eating. Shut up. Shut up!
A: I want-
N: Oh, I'm gonna reveal what you just did. You just completely manhandled that cat by.

(1x65) D: I know dude. Oh shit dude. No dude. Preserve natural patterns. Please. oh my god. It's so small today.
A: Can I narrate? No.
N: Oh. Shit. Dude. Fill that bowl. ~~~Fill that bowl up. Oh! Oh! Oh!

5.6 Larrue & Trognon (1992) deal explicitly with how an interminable monologue should be dealt with in a meeting situation:
If the current speaker embarks on an 'interminable' monologue, as if there were no potential speakers officially waiting to speak. . . only the chairman himself can breach the system: if he wishes to (and he must) call upon a new speaker, he is forced to withdraw the turn from the person who is unduly retaining it. . . (p. 189)

5.6.1 Since sober speech is not a meeting, but a conversation, this rule does not apply, in fact, this kind of "interminable" monologue happens often.

5.6.2 In the sober speech, seven total staves of monologue have *D* as speaker, and 15 staves of monologue have *A* as the speaker.

a.) None of the overly long monologues are sanctioned/commented upon in the sober data— longer narrative stories are common in the regular conversation one has while sober.

5.6.3 However, in the stoned data, the ONLY monologue, given by *D*, staves (1x109)-(1x116) is sanctioned twice during the story, such as stave (1x112) (*A:* "That's too much"). Furthermore, it is explicitly ignored upon it's completion at stave (1x116) (*N:* "It's kitty World War III over here").

a.) This shows that in stoned speech one is operating under the conventions of a meeting— without the aide of a Chairperson— where such turn-hogging is not allowed.

(1x112) D: cause I was going t' translate for my english class. English 402 with Dr. Riedinger.
A: That's too much.
N:

(1x116) D: Then I went and hung down at SPC for awhile. An' I skipped my english class cuz I didn't get my homework done. I think I just told that.
A:
N: Shit. It's kitty World War III over here.

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6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Dude. A specter is haunting linguistics— the specter of intoxication.

6.2 The interaction between language and intoxication, the most well known and encountered practice of society, is greatly lacking— this study seeks to help fill that gap.

6.3 It was shown how, while sober speech can be analyzed using the pre-existing models, marijuana intoxicated (stoned) speech needs a new framework for any conclusive discussion, much as "meetings talk" has had its own set of rules developed.

6.4 I created a preliminary framework combining traditional models of conversation, topic, and turn-taking together with a newer model of meetings-talk to arrive at a working model for stoned speech. This model allows for both recoverable (mitigated) and non-recoverable (unmitigated) topics, topics that succeed and topics that fail, and the special category of topic regain, all of which are necessary for a discussion of stoned speech that otherwise would appear to exist without any recognizable adherents, only describable as "breaking the rules" of conversation.

6.5 Certainly, further research should be done in groups with less variation among speaker backgrounds (sexuality and gender) to attempt to reasonably control for any factors other than intoxication that may be manifesting themselves.

6.6 Also, turn overlap differences between sober and stoned speech could make up a vital part of this new model for intoxicated conversational analysis and need to be addressed in more detail.

6.7 So, while the actual work thus far on intoxicated speech may be scant, the possibilities for research in this area are unlimited.

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